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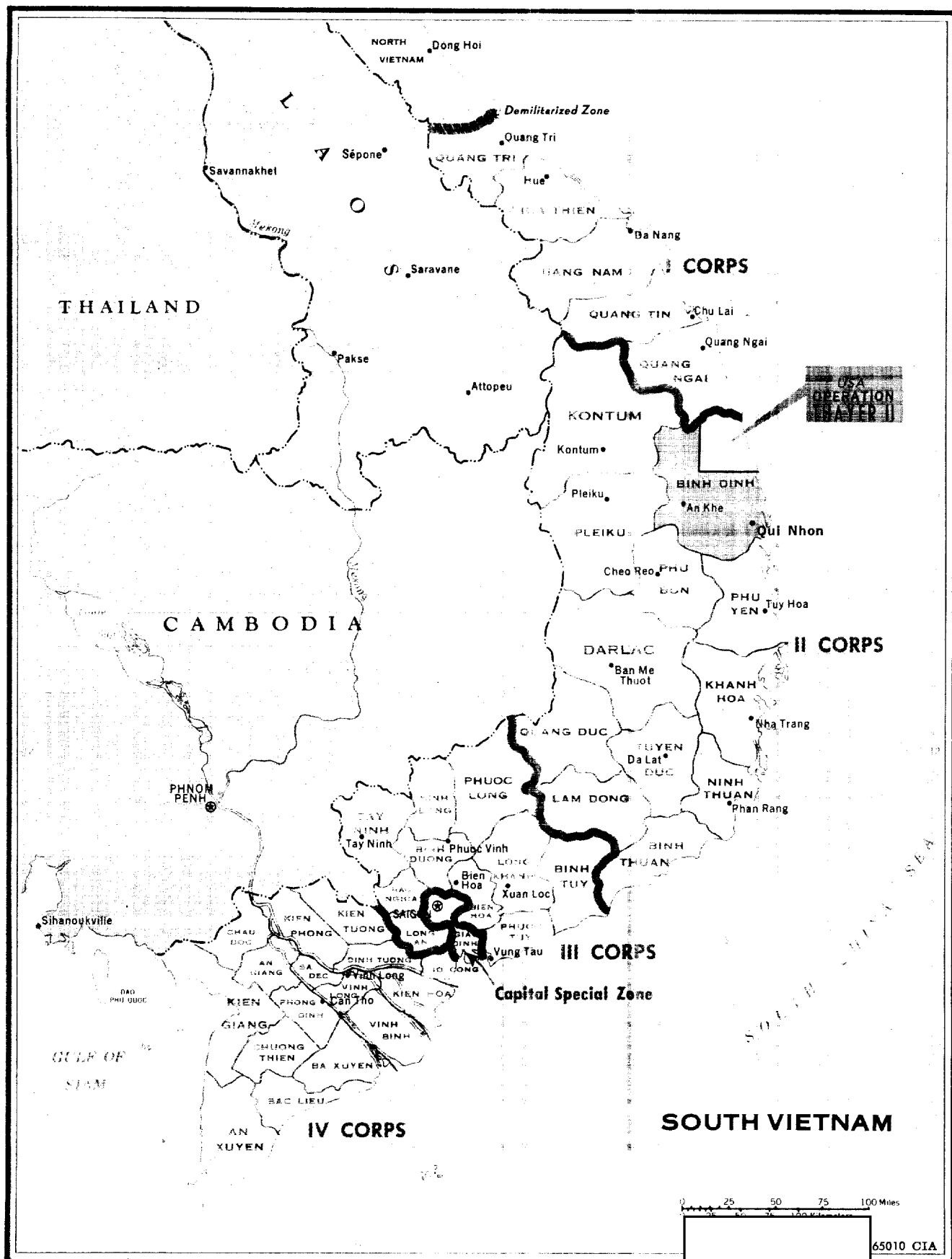
25X1

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

1. Vietnam: Current situation report. (Page 1)
2. Communist China: Rival Red Guard movements developing. (Page 3)
3. Nigeria: Gowon and Ojukwu draw further apart. (Page 4)
4. Notes. [redacted] Burundi - Communist China;
[redacted] Japan. (Page 5)

25X1
25X1



25X1

25X1

*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Heavy fighting erupted yesterday between a Communist force of undetermined strength and elements of the US 1st Air Cavalry Division conducting Operation THAYER II in northeastern Binh Dinh Province.

Although contact was broken at darkness after nearly five hours of sustained combat, US forces appear to have effectively surrounded the enemy unit in an area approximately 40 miles north-northwest of Qui Nhon.

According to preliminary casualty reports, 69 Viet Cong have thus far been killed, as against American losses of five killed and 11 wounded. (Map)

South Vietnam and Cambodia: Cambodia is apparently considering several steps to counter South Vietnam's latest attempt to control shipping on the Mekong River--a regulation, enforced since mid-November, that ships bound for Cambodia travel in convoy.

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Cambodian officials

may ask the United Nations' Mekong Committee to bring pressure on Saigon to rescind the ruling. The officials held out the possibility that Cambodia may be forced to withdraw from the Mekong Committee unless normal ship movements on the river are resumed.

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Cambodia has already experienced some economic dislocation stemming from delays involved in the convoy system.

serious petroleum shortages are already being felt in the capital.

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2 Dec 66

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The South Vietnamese Navy is presenting a US request to the ruling Directorate asking relaxation of restrictions on POL deliveries to Phnom Penh. This could ease the situation

25X1

2 Dec 66

2

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25X1

Communist China: The unstable situation in the leadership has apparently resulted in the creation of rival Red Guard organizations in Peking and elsewhere.

The militant Red Guard "Revolution Rebel" headquarters in Peking announced on 22 November that it intended to ransack the headquarters of its main rival, which it called a "royalist" group that was trying to shield party committees.

The "Rebel" headquarters is believed to have directed the goon squads that for the past six weeks have been invading and ransacking government institutions and factories. The earliest reference to this group appears in an undated wall poster, just available, which describes its direction of a force of 2,000 Red Guards who on 21 October invaded an agricultural institute, seized files, and beat up several people.

Although People's Daily on 10 November ordered the Red Guards not to interfere with factory production, a newspaper published by the "Rebel" headquarters revealed in late November that clashes were still occurring, especially in factories. According to an account of a 15-hour battle on 16 November at the large Peking First Machine Tool Plant, in which 60 people reportedly were injured, factory loudspeakers exhorted workers to "shoot to kill; these students are gangsters." The "Rebel" newspaper has tried to put the blame for such outbreaks on the workers, declaring that they "fail to realize the real situation."

Outside of Peking the Red Guard movement appears to have split on the same political issue.

25X1

Nigeria: Prospects for an early meeting between Supreme Commander Gowon and Eastern military governor Ojukwu now appear dimmer than ever.

In major speeches on 30 November Gowon and Ojukwu spelled out their sharply divergent positions on the future of the Nigerian federation. Ojukwu again proposed to reduce interregional ties to the level of a confederation.

Gowon flatly rejected this. He instead announced plans to convene a broadly representative constituent assembly to which he would submit a draft of a constitution designed to create and preserve an "effective" federation. This maneuver is presumably intended to bypass Ojukwu's regime.

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Burundi - Communist China: The Micombero regime may be planning to re-establish relations with Communist China soon. The American wife of a Burundi diplomat told the US chargé on 1 December that President Micombero and other members of the new government have recently intimated more than once that Peking's representatives are to return "shortly." The diplomat's wife, who with her husband has some access to the regime's leaders, said she believes the US Embassy will be expelled at the same time. [REDACTED]

25X1

25X1

2 Dec 66

5

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Japan: Prime Minister Sato's poor showing in his re-election to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) presidency yesterday further weakens his party's prospects in next year's general elections. Factional maneuvering is likely to increase and to result in splitting the LDP vote. The vote against Sato considerably exceeded the total Japanese political observers had predicted would seriously damage his prestige. No opposition standard bearer emerged, however; former cabinet minister Fujiyama's unimpressive showing disqualifies him as a rival to the prime minister.

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

The United States Intelligence Board on 1 December 1966 approved the following national intelligence estimates:

SNIE 70-2-66, "Probable Developments Following the UN General Assembly Resolution to Terminate the South-West Africa Mandate"

[REDACTED]

NIE 11-12-66, "The Outlook for Sino-Soviet Relations"

[REDACTED]

2 Dec 66

7

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